



News Release

For immediate release: October 15, 2010

(10-163)

Contacts:	Carolyn Cox , Office of Drinking Water	360-236-3162
	Kelly Alsin, Northwest Water Systems	360-876-0958
	Jocelyne Gray, Mason County Public Utility District 1	360-877-5249
	Gordon MacCracken , Communications Office	360-236-4072

Mason County: Potlatch Beach Mutual customers urged to boil tap water

OLYMPIA — The state Department of Health is advising customers of the Potlatch Beach Mutual Water System in north Mason County to boil their tap water or buy bottled water. *E. coli* has been detected in the water system.

The agency's Office of Drinking Water is working closely with Northwest Water Systems, the system's operator, to determine the source of the contamination. Boil-water notices were distributed today door-to-door to Potlatch Beach Mutual customers.

Two other water systems in the area – Minerva Terrace and Canal Mutual – also were placed under boil-water advisories earlier this week because of *E. coli* contamination. The three advisories collectively affect about 160 homes and businesses.

“While we can’t say these advisories are directly related, we typically see more bacterial contamination problems caused by stormwater runoff this time of year,” said Clark Halvorson, manager of Southwest regional operations for the Office of Drinking Water. “That’s why we encourage small water systems and private well owners in this area to test their water at least monthly in the fall in order to detect problems more quickly and take action.”

The Mason County Health Department is working with area food establishments to be sure they understand the order and follow the safety precautions needed for food preparation and water service.

The health advisory includes several precautionary steps customers should take: Use boiled water or bottled water for drinking, brushing teeth, preparing food, dishwashing, and making ice. Tap water should be boiled for one minute and allowed to cool before use.

— More —

Potlatch Beach Mutual boil-water advisory

October 15, 2010

Page 2

The advisories will remain in effect until the state health agency and water system operators are satisfied there is no longer a health threat. Customers will be notified as the advisories end.

No illnesses have been reported in conjunction with this water contamination event.

Potlatch Beach Mutual water system customers who have questions can call Northwest Water Systems at 360-876-0958. Minerva Terrace and Canal Mutual customers can call Mason County Public Utility District 1 at 360-877-5249.

###

Visit the Washington Department of Health website at <http://www.doh.wa.gov> for *a healthy dose of information*.